



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

PEABODY MAN CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER-FOR-HIRE

Boston, MA... A former resident of Peabody was charged today in federal court with attempting to arrange a murder-for-hire to kill his estranged wife while he was in state prison awaiting trial.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan and William J. Hoover, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in New England, announced today that **GUILLERMO FREDERICO VASCO**, age 30, formerly of Peabody, was charged by complaint with attempted murder-for-hire.

"Guillermo Vasco is charged with the unconscionable act of plotting to kill his spouse," stated U.S. Attorney Sullivan. "Men who commit or attempt to commit violent acts against women will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I want to commend the ATF agents who worked on this case for their rapid response and thorough investigation of the matter."

According to the affidavit filed in support of the complaint, in February, 2005, while incarcerated at the Essex County Correctional Facility ("ECCF") on pending state charges, **VASCO** approached another detainee at the ECCF to inquire if the detainee knew anyone who would kill **VASCO**'s wife for money. At the time, **VASCO** was at the ECCF awaiting trial in connection with a pending case in Salem Superior Court in which **VASCO** is charged with aggravated kidnaping, aggravated rape, and home invasion. The victim of his alleged offenses is **VASCO**'s estranged wife.

According to the affidavit, after being approached by **VASCO** the detainee informed law enforcement. Thereafter under the direction of ATF agents the detainee told **VASCO** that he had a friend in Maine who could carry out the hit on **VASCO**'s wife. **VASCO** first contacted the "hit man" (actually an undercover ATF agent) via a letter sent to the hit man's supposed post office box in Maine. In coded language referring to his estranged wife and daughter as "dogs" **VASCO** requested the hit man kill his wife.

Following receipt of the letter, **VASCO** was told by the detainee that his friend the hit

man would meet with **VASCO** at the ECCF gaining entry to the facility by posing as an attorney. On April 26, 2005, the undercover ATF agent posing as the hit man met with **VASCO** at the facility in a private inmate/attorney meeting room. During that meeting it is alleged that **VASCO** discussed with the undercover ATF agent methods for disposing of his wife's body after she was murdered. Ultimately it was decided that the undercover ATF agent would put the body in an oil drum, filled with cement to weigh it down, and throw it into the ocean. Holes would also be drilled into the oil drum so that the corpse would eventually be eaten. It is alleged that **VASCO** additionally wanted his daughter kidnaped at the time of his wife's murder and brought to his mother in Ecuador via Canada. **VASCO** agreed to pay \$10,000 to the undercover ATF agent to murder his wife and another \$10,000 to have his daughter kidnaped.

Thereafter **VASCO**'s estranged wife agreed to pose for photographs of her supposed murder by the hit man. **VASCO**'s wife was made up to appear as though she had been beaten and shot in the head. She then posed lying on the ground as though dead in a wooded area adjacent to a body of water and next to a 50 gallon oil drum. The ATF took a number of digital pictures of **VASCO**'s wife and the scene. On May 17, 2005 the undercover agent again met in person with **VASCO** at the ECCF at which time he showed **VASCO** some of the pictures of his wife's supposedly dead body. **VASCO** allegedly smiled while the undercover ATF agent described murdering his wife. At the conclusion of the meeting it is alleged that **VASCO** thanked the undercover ATF agent and stated, "You have my friendship, my loyalty, my respect."

"Guillermo Vasco was in jail awaiting trial for allegedly committing violent crimes. While there he allegedly chose to continue his violent criminal behavior by hiring someone to kill the main witness against him, his wife," stated William Hoover, Special Agent In Charge of ATF's Boston Field Division. "He was even willing to have his daughter 'suffer the same fate' as his wife if she could not be reunited with his family in Ecuador. ATF is committed to keeping our neighborhoods safe from violent crime. Today's actions start the process of keeping one more violent offender out of our neighborhoods for a very long time."

VASCO is currently in pre-trial detention in the Essex County Correctional Facility awaiting trial on unrelated state charges. If convicted of the federal attempted murder-for-hire charge, **VASCO** faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James Lang, Chief of Sullivan's Major Crimes Unit and Assistant U.S. Attorney Sandra Bower also in Sullivan's Major Crimes Unit.

The details contained in the complaint are allegations. The defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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